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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D. C.

March 15, 1943.

Fruit and Vegetable Branch Memorandum No. C 1

To: Federal Shipping Point Supervisors and Inspectors in Charge Receiving Markets.

From: W. G. Meal, Chief

Subject: Field Reports on Applications for Priorities on Marketing Facilities.

In order that this Branch may make proper recommendations relative to applications for priorities for facilities for handling fresh fruits and vegetables it may be necessary at times to call on our technical men in the field direct for quick information on the adequacy of existing facilities. So far as practicable, however, our requests for such information will be made through the Regional Administrators' offices. Supervisors of Shipping Point inspection and their key men, because of their daily contacts with packing house operations, are specially qualified to furnish the needed information relative to fresh fruit and vegetable handling facilities within their jurisdictions. In the interest of speed in obtaining information of this kind the Washington office will frequently make direct requests of such field men for the specific information desired with copies of such requests forwarded to the Regional Administrator of the region involved.

In general, applications for facilities for handling fresh fruits and vegetables will fall into one of four classes. These, with the type of information desired in each, are:

Replacement: Regarding replacement machinery, we need to know the condition of the existing equipment and in the opinion of the field staff whether or not the existing equipment can be used over a longer period without seriously hampering the efficiency of the organization with resulting losses.

Equipment for expansion: Without regard to the competitive opportunity of the applying shipper, does the expected volume of the community require this additional equipment? In other words, can other sheds in the community handle this volume?

Additional labor saving equipment: Some additions of this type of equipment are becoming necessary, owing to the acute labor situation. This, however, varies by districts and deals. Concerning applications for this type of equipment, we are concerned with this question: In view of the expected labor situation (as compared to last season) is this added equipment absolutely essential?

Equipment for merchandising advantage: In this class, of course, falls such equipment as that for facing, polishing, waxing; and under certain conditions, washing. In this field we are concerned with this question: In view of the need for material for actual food production and conservation, is this particular piece of equipment as comparatively essential?

In considering all of the above it should be kept in mind that we have the basic responsibility of distributing a short supply of critical materials where it will perform the maximum use of preserving food supplies. "In other words, we must make 'too little' go as far as possible." This is particularly true of such equipment as motors and machinery requiring considerable quantities of critical metals.

It is highly important that those who are asked to obtain information of this kind will proceed in such a manner as to protect their relations with the trade. To assist them with this it is thought best that all responsibility for recommendations be assumed here and that the field staff understand and clearly convey to the applicant that they are merely surveying the situation and transmitting information upon which will be based the final decision.

W. G. Neal